



Town of Bluffton  
20 Bridge Street  
P.O. Box 386  
Bluffton, SC 29910  
(843) 706-4500 (Phone)  
(843) 757-6720 (Facsimile)

# Media Release

## **Town of Bluffton Steps Forward in Economic Development As it Purchases Additional Land and Hosts Inaugural Public Development Corporation Board Meeting;** **Two Crucial Steps in Attracting Companies and Jobs to Bluffton**

The Town of Bluffton entered into a contract to buy approximately seven acres of land within the area known as Buckwalter Place with Parcel 6 LLC, the master developer of Buckwalter Place. This land purchase will expand the Town's May River Technology Park at Buckwalter Place and enable the Town to better negotiate with prospective companies to move their businesses and primary jobs to the Town.

This land purchase enlarges the footprint for the designated Technology Park to 30.25 acres.

"When the town owns land, we are able to compete with other areas to attract companies and jobs," Mayor Lisa Sulka said. "Land gives the Town a competitive edge when we are able to offer options to companies to reduce their initial relocation investments."

Marc Orlando, Bluffton's Deputy Town Manager and Director of Growth Management, said the upcoming land purchase was made possible from utility tax credits, not tax payers' dollars. Statewide utilities contribute to economic development projects as a way to contribute to their communities as well as receive a tax credit. Local utilities, Hargray Communications and Palmetto Electric Cooperative, contributed to the funding to assist in this land purchase.

In another crucial step towards further economic development, the Town of Bluffton hosted the inaugural Board meeting of the Bluffton Public Development Corporation January 30. The Town established the Board in late 2012. The Board will serve as an autonomous organization directing economic development ventures in the Town of Bluffton.

"Towns can't go to the bank and get a commercial loan like corporations or individuals can do. The Town can own land however it is limited in using its land as a negotiation tool due to the fact the Town cannot operate as a private business, in the eyes of commercial law. Establishing a Bluffton Public Development Corporation gives the Town an arm to buy, sell, hold, transfer or lease property," Frannie Heizer, an attorney with the McNair Law Firm who is also the Town's bond counsel, said.

"This Board allows the Town to become a competitive player in economic development when recruiting businesses with primary jobs," Orlando said.

The Corporation's next meeting will be February 13 at 5: 30 p.m. at Town Hall. The public is encouraged to attend.



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The seven members of the Bluffton Public Development Board are Doug Tardio; Chief Operating Officer of CareCore National, Roland King; Human Resources Consultant, Steve Miller, Tax Partner at Cherry Bekaert, LLP, Greg Johnson; Branch Sales Manager at Region's Bank, Sarah Reed; Financial Advisor at Edward Jones, Roberts Vaux; Attorney at Vaux & Marscher and Mac Dunaway; Attorney at Vaux & Marscher.